

SAFETY ISSUES

Circuit Breakers - If your power goes out, check your home's circuit breakers or fuses first. Your power could be out because a circuit has tripped or a fuse has blown.

Report Electrical Outages - See if the lights in your neighborhood are off. Contact PG&E at **800-743-5002** for information or to report an outage.

Downed Power Lines - If you can see any power lines on the ground, stay at least 10 feet away from them as electricity might still be flowing through the lines.

Sensitive Appliances - Protect appliances from possible power surges when electricity is restored. Once a blackout is announced, unplug appliances and computers, if possible, and turn off lights. Leave one low wattage incandescent light on so you know when the power comes back on.

Keep Food Cold - Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to help prevent food spoilage. Refrigerated foods should remain safe to eat for four hours. Food in a closed freezer can stay frozen for up to two days. If in doubt, throw it out.

Dry Ice - Add dry or block ice to the freezer to help keep food frozen. Never add dry ice with your bare hands or place directly on top of food.

Water - Discontinue non-essential water usage. Do not drink cloudy or dirty water. Don't be alarmed if chlorine level is higher than normal. Notify water officials of low or no water pressure.

Stay Cool - During hot days, stay cool indoors with windows open, and drink plenty of water.

Check on Neighbors – Be a good neighbor. Check on neighbors with special needs: the elderly, mobility-impaired, medically dependent or children who are home alone.

Life Support Equipment - If someone in your household uses life support equipment, make arrangements with the provider or your doctor for a back-up power supply. In addition, all hospitals are required to have back-up power. Medically dependent persons without adequate back-up power can call 911 for transport to a hospital where power can be supplied until the outage is over.

Alternate Power - Establish independent, short-term power supplies such as battery-operated devices for most needs. Since planned outages are of short duration, plan to forego activities that require power until the outage is over. Use caution when using a generator. Safe and legal fuel storage requires careful planning. If you must use a generator, NEVER plug it into any electric outlet in your home. Plug appliances directly into the generator using heavy-duty extension cords. Be sure to place the generator outdoors and away from windows, household exhaust fans or dryer vents.

Monitor Radio and Television - Monitor battery operated radio or television for current information on the outage.

Telephones - Be sure that you have at least one telephone that does not depend on electricity in case you need to call 911. Cordless phones will not function during an outage. Keep your cell phone powered up.

Candles – If you use candles for lighting, place them on a fireproof surface.

Fireplace – If you use your fireplace for heat, be responsible! Don't burn wood with paint or stain. Do not leave an open flame. Make sure you close your fireplace screen to prevent sparks from flying. Do not store newspapers, kindling, or matches near the fireplace.

Smoke Detectors – Make sure you have smoke detectors in appropriate rooms. Change the batteries regularly, preferably every six months, and test them monthly. If your smoke detectors are wired directly into the electrical system of your home, they will not operate during a power failure unless the batteries are working. Special smoke

detectors are available for people with hearing impairment.

Fire Extinguisher – Have a fire extinguisher available and know how to use it. Have a fire evacuation plan and practice fire drills.

Garage Door - Know how to manually release and open any electric doors, like garage doors.

Traffic Signals – During an area-wide power outage, traffic signals may be out. If so, remember the intersection becomes a four-way stop. Anticipate long traffic delays where the power is out.

Keep Cash on Hand – Keep cash and coins on hand. In power failures, ATM's and gas station pumps may not work and you may need to make a phone call at a pay phone.

Avoid Peak Energy Periods – Try to conserve electricity between the hours of 5 - 9 AM and 4 - 7 PM.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a disability, being prepared can reduce the fear, panic, and inconvenience that surround an emergency.

Backup Power Supplies - Learn what you can do in a power outage. Know how to start or connect a backup power supply for essential medical equipment.

Flashlights - Keep a flashlight or light stick handy to signal your whereabouts to other people and for illumination to aid in signing or written communication.

Self-Help Network - Create a self-help network of relatives, friends or co-workers. Discuss your disability and ask for their assistance in an emergency. Arrange for someone to check on you in an emergency.

Teach Others how to Help You - Teach others how to operate necessary equipment. Give a key to a neighbor or friend who may be able to assist you. Make sure they know where you keep emergency supplies.

Hearing Impaired - Remind friends that you cannot hear warnings or emergency instructions. Ask them to be your source of emergency information as it comes over their radio.

Medical Alert Systems - Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call if you are immobilized in an emergency. If you have a severe speech, language, or hearing disability, learn how to use TDD telephone services. Wear medical alert tags or bracelets to identify your disability
Wheelchair - If you use a wheelchair, show friends how to operate your wheelchair so they can move you if necessary. Make sure your friends know the size of your wheelchair in case it has to be transported.

Personal Attendants - If you use a personal care attendant obtained from an agency, check to see if the agency has special provisions for emergencies such as power outages.

Life Sustaining Equipment - Know the location and availability of more than one facility if you are dependent on a dialysis machine or other life-sustaining equipment or treatment.

Pets - If you have an assistance dog, be aware that the dog may become confused or disoriented in an emergency. Store extra food, water and supplies for your dog.

SAN JOSE *PREPARED!* Join the **San Jose *Prepared!*** Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to help yourself and your neighbors learn skills like disaster medical care, disaster fire fighting, and light search and rescue in an emergency. For further information call **408-277-4598** or visit the website at www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/oes/oes.htm.

LEARN TO BE SELF-RELIANT

By following the easy tips below and inside this brochure, you can ensure that you and your family will be prepared whenever the power goes out.

HELPING CHILDREN COPE

Children depend on daily routines: regular times for meals, school and play. At night, they are accustomed to having light and entertainment available at the flick of a switch. When a power outage interrupts this routine, children may become anxious and look to you and other adults for help.

How *you* react to a power outage gives children clues on how to act. If you react with alarm, a child may become frightened. When talking with children about an outage, be sure to present a realistic picture about what has happened and the expected outcome.

Explain the Situation - Your calming words and actions will provide reassurance.

Listen - Concentrate on your child's emotional needs by asking the child what's uppermost in his or her mind. Encourage children to describe what they're feeling. Listen to what they say. If possible, include the entire family in the discussion.

School Plans - Ask your children's teachers and caregivers about power outage emergency plans for schools and day-care centers.

Emergency Number - Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones and teach your children how and when to call for help.

Entertainment - Keep flashlights, light sticks, playing cards, books, notebooks, magazines, board games and craft supplies handy.

SECURITY ISSUES

Family Reunification – Have a plan for checking on and reuniting family members.

Stay Home – If possible, stay home and be safe during a power outage. Stores and gas stations may be closed. Don't add to the confusion by driving around.

Security Gates - Find out the steps needed to open and close security gates without electricity.

House Numbers - Ensure house numbers are readily visible from the street for emergency response.

Reset Appliances – When power comes back on you may have to reset your clocks, VCR's, microwave ovens, programmable thermostats, burglar and/or fire alarms.

Suspicious Activity – Watch for suspicious activity. Criminals may decide to take advantage of the power outage. Always call 911 if you notice suspicious activity.

*The City of San José
Office of Emergency Services
wants you to be safe
in any emergency!*

EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

Maintain an emergency supply kit for your home, office and/or car including:

- Battery-powered radio, flashlights, and batteries
- Extra set of car keys
- Supply of easy-to-prepare, nonperishable foods (packaged snacks, fruits, water and juices)
- Manual can opener
- Wind-up or battery-operated clock
- Cash, coins and credit cards
- Change of clothing, rain gear, and sturdy shoes
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- If you have a baby, include extra diapers and other infant care items
- First aid kit
- Essential medicines and prescription information
- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of doctors and pharmacist
- Extra pair of glasses, hearing aid batteries, extra wheelchair batteries, oxygen, medication, catheters, food for guide or service dogs, or other special equipment you might need
- A list of the style and serial numbers of medical devices such as pacemakers.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

**City of San José
Office of Emergency Services
408-277-4596**

SELF-RELIANCE IN A POWER OUTAGE

A power outage is just one type of emergency that can occur in San José. When the power is out for a long period of time, as in any emergency, requests for fire, police, medical, and other public services will begin to mount. At some point, the increased demand for services could result in delayed response times.

For this reason, every resident should learn to be self-reliant in any emergency. Even though rotating power outages typically last only a few hours, individuals living in Earthquake Country should be prepared to be independent for 72 hours or longer.

The City of San José, State of California, American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Pacific Gas and Electric Company have provided the following information on what to do in an emergency, whether it is a power outage, earthquake, or other event.

